

Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

Unedited transcript

434th Meeting

Tuesday, 3 June 1997, 10 a.m.
Vienna

Chairman: Mr. RAO (India)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

The CHAIRMAN: I now declare open the 434th meeting of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

I would like to inform the Committee that I have received *notes verbales* from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Thailand, in which they request permission to attend the current session of COPUOS as observers. I therefore suggest that, in conformity with past practice, we invite those delegations to attend the current session and to address the Committee as appropriate. This is without prejudice to further requests of this nature and does not involve any decision by the Committee concerning status. It is a courtesy we customarily extend to delegations. If I hear no objections, we shall proceed accordingly.

It is so decided.

This morning we will continue our debate under item 5 of the agenda, "General exchange of views". As I announced yesterday, we will continue our general debate this afternoon and tomorrow morning. It is my intention to close the list of speakers for this agenda item at the end of this morning's meeting; I therefore urge delegations wishing to take the floor under this agenda item to inscribe their names on the list of speakers as soon as possible.

This afternoon we will continue our debate on item 5. Once the list of speakers under that item is exhausted, it is my intention to proceed to agenda item 6, "Ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes". The same process will apply regarding all agenda items.

Before continuing our debate under agenda item 5, I would like to give the floor to the Director of

the Office for Outer Space Affairs, Mr. Jasentuliyana, who will provide the Committee with an overview of the activities of OOSA over the past year.

Mr. N. JASENTULIYANA (Director, Office for Outer Space Affairs; Deputy Director-General, United Nations Office at Vienna): I would like to give you a brief overview of the work of the Office for Outer Space Affairs over the past 12 months, and of the documents prepared by the Office for this session of the Committee.

Before doing so, I would like to convey the congratulations of both myself and the Secretariat to the new Bureau of the Committee. The Secretariat is delighted to see you, Mr. Chairman, assuming the role of Chairman of the Committee, and we greatly look forward to working with you in the coming sessions. Member States could not have found a better person to lead the revitalized Committee as we prepare for UNISPACE III and other challenges which lie ahead of us. For many years, you have demonstrated both in the United Nations and elsewhere your commitment to ensuring that the benefits of space are shared by all countries.

The Secretariat is also sorry to see Ambassador Hohenfellner, who has so ably led the Committee for several years, leave the Chair. He has always been a strong supporter of the Secretariat and has ensured that it is well established in Vienna, with the programme of the Austrian Space Agency supporting the work of the Office.

We also welcome Ambassador González and Professor Kabbaj, two prominent and experienced promoters of international cooperation in space activities both in the United Nations and in their own countries, who join the Chairman to help lead the Committee for the next three years. My staff are committed to the promotion of international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space, and are fully prepared to share with

all Member States the extraordinary opportunity to ensure that space technology advances the human condition in the new millennium.

In the Office for Outer Space Affairs, the past year has been a time for developing strategies to face the new challenges in fulfilling its task as the catalyst of international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space. The Office constantly felt the need for creative and innovative thinking to adjust its work programme to the rapidly changing environment within and outside the United Nations, while continuing to further enhance the quality of services for the international community.

Over recent years, various strategies have been suggested and adopted to reform the United Nations and streamline its work, while responding to the needs of the changing global society. Continuous efforts have been made to identify high-priority programmes and to ensure their implementation, despite all departments and offices having been requested to reduce the level of resources required. The Programme on Peaceful Uses of Outer Space aims at maximizing the benefits of space science and technology for all members of the international community, particularly the developing countries. Many Member States, developed and developing countries alike, expressed their support for this Programme, which continues to be of major importance.

The potential of space technology to enhance human security and the human condition is now well established. Data from remote sensing satellites are essential for the protection of the global environment, the enhancement of sustainable development, and to ensure environmental security. Communication satellites also allow the exchange of various information at the global level, contributing to the advancement of socio-economic conditions and enrichment of cultural knowledge. In the changing global society, the role of space science and technology has become crucial, particularly in implementing the recommendations of recent world conferences, such as the Earth Summit in 1992, and achieving the goals defined in the report of the Secretary-General on an Agenda for Peace and an Agenda for Development.

While space technology has already become an integral part of human activities, what is now available in our daily lives is but a mere indication of what space technology can do in the future. As the Secretary-General emphasized in his report, it is the responsibility of the United Nations to play a leading role in global society to meet the challenges of the new era with the innovative use of space technology.

While the Office is aware of its responsibility to meet this challenge in implementing the Programme on the Peaceful Use of Outer Space, it is well aware that to keep the level of required resources to the minimum while increasing the effectiveness of its mandated activities represents a challenge in itself. As far as human resources are concerned, the Office continues to benefit from the services of extremely devoted staff who make untiring efforts to carry out these mandated activities and to better respond to the sharply increasing demands of the international community, in spite of the decrease in available resources. The Office would have been unable to fulfil its role without the special efforts of its staff.

The turnover in personnel of the Office is low; in order to fill the vacancy created by the departure of Mr. Bruce Schoenfeld of the United States, Mr. Mitchell Hsieh of the United States joined the Office in August 1996. The Government of Austria has extended its support to the Office through employment of an associate expert, Mr. Werner Balogh, a specialist in space technology, who joined us earlier this year and replaced Mr. Stephan Mayer, who had successfully completed his two-year assignment. I would like to express our great appreciation to the Government of Austria for its generous support that enables us to better serve the Committee and Member States.

In view of further staff cuts which are foreseen, I would like to make a special appeal to other interested countries to provide associate experts at the junior level and/or senior officers to work with the Office for a year or so. This would strengthen the human resources of the Office and ensure the implementation of its important activities, particularly as concerns operational activities in developing countries. Those experts would in turn benefit from unique working experience with the United Nations and would thereby take those benefits back to their own countries upon completion of their assignments.

Concerning financial resources, the regular budget of the United Nations, which was initially approved by the General Assembly for the 1996-1997 biennium, was \$2.61 billion, \$20 million less than the level approved in the previous biennium. In 1996, all managers were requested to make changes to their programmes due to these budget reductions, and the Office also had to postpone or cancel some activities which had been planned in the Programme on Space Applications. The proposed programme and budget for the biennium 1998-1999 as presented by the Secretary-General in New York last week represents a further \$124 million reduction in appropriations from the current budget. This includes a

reduction of some 1,000 posts from the staffing tables approved for the current biennium and on top of this, a further vacancy rate of 6.4 per cent will be maintained.

In view of the financial situation of the Organization, we recognize that the next three years will be an extremely challenging period. Our mandated activities, in particular those of the Programme on Space Applications, are doomed to be curtailed unless voluntary contribution are forthcoming to make up the deficit. In this respect, voluntary contributions from Member States, specialized agencies of the United Nations and other international organizations are essential in order to meet the increasing demands of the international community for training programmes and technical advisory services. The regular budget generally covers less than one third of the total cost of the programme activities. I would like to take this opportunity to express my deep appreciation in particular to the European Space Agency, other international organizations and the host countries that have provided local facilities, transportation, accommodation etc. for the programme activities in the past year.

The reports of the 1996 activities of the Programme on Space Applications and the information on its 1997 activities were submitted for review by the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, as indicated in document A/AC.105/672. The proposed activities for 1998 were reviewed by the Subcommittee and recommended for approval. Subject to the approval of this Committee and the General Assembly, planning for the 1998 activities is now under way. Following the recommendations of both the Subcommittee and of COPUOS, the Office continued to direct major efforts towards the establishment of regional centres for space science and technology education in developing countries.

I am pleased to report that the Asia and Pacific centre is now operational, and its second course on satellite communications began in January 1997.

In the Latin American and Caribbean region, in March this year Brazil and Mexico signed an agreement establishing the centre in that region. Establishment of centres in Africa, in Morocco and Nigeria (for francophone and anglophone countries respectively), is also well under way. For the Central and Eastern European region, the Office is assisting Member States in participating in international efforts to establish an educational system which will comprise a network of existing space science and technology education institutions in Europe.

The Office continued to make progress in other activities of the Programme, such as the COPINE project to establish an efficient information network among scientists, educators and decision-makers in Africa by using satellite-based information systems. Follow-up activities to the various workshops and seminars organized under the auspices of the Programme, particularly in the field of space science, have yielded concrete results in the enhancement of regional cooperation.

The Office also assisted the Government of Uruguay in organizing the third Conference of the Americas, which successfully concluded its work by the adoption of the Declaration of Punta del Este and a Plan of Action for the region (which was circulated to all Member States in Latin America and the Caribbean). The Office will continue to provide technical advisory assistance to the Government of Uruguay in implementation of the follow-up activities.

The staff of the Programme on Space Applications and the entire Office continue to work assiduously to ensure the effective and efficient organization of those activities. I would like in particular to acknowledge the efforts of Dr. Abiodun, Expert on Space Applications, in planning and managing those activities. He will report in detail on the activities of the Programme on Space Applications under agenda item 7, "Report of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee".

The Committee Services and Resource Section of the Office has given full attention over the last year to responding to the request of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies for technical and legal studies and other analytical reports on various aspects of space activities. The Office continued to enhance its information services for Member States, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and the general public, in particular through the international space information service, the establishment of which was recommended by UNISPACE 82 and endorsed by the General Assembly.

As part of the follow-up to the efficiency review, the Office has made further efforts to increase efficiency in the provision of information services by increased use of the Internet. The Office created its Home Page to allow Internet users to learn more about the work of the Office and the space-related activities of the United Nations, and it is updated on a daily basis. The Home Page contains information on all the space-related legal instruments adopted by the General Assembly, including their full texts, information on COPUOS and

its subsidiary bodies (including their reports and documents), and an overview of the Programme on Space Applications. I am pleased to announce that the Home Page has received positive feedback from other United Nations offices as well as the space community and the general public. On the basis of these comments, the Home Page is being further developed to better respond to user needs.

In connection with the use of Internet for the international space information service, the Office continues its cooperation with the Committee on Earth Observation Satellites (CEOS) and the German Space Agency in establishing the CEOS information locator service. The prime function of this service is to assist users in developing countries to locate and access the sources of information on Earth observation data, projects and services. The system demonstrator is already available on Internet.

In order to further enhance the coordination of space-related activities among the organizations within the United Nations system, the Office has also lead inter-agency efforts to expand the use of Internet, as request by the inter-agency meeting on outer space activities. At the eighteenth session of the meeting (held last week), the Office made a proposal to expand the use of Internet for more frequent exchange of information on space-related activities within the United Nations system. The meeting welcomed the proposal and agreed to proceed with the implementation of the initial phase of the proposal, which would allow a visitor to the Office's Home Page to visit the Home Pages of other organizations with space activities. The meeting also agreed to give further consideration to how to implement the development of other phases of the project, namely the utilization of the Internet, in preparing the annual report of the Secretary-General on the coordination of space activities, and the establishment of an electronic forum for inter-agency dialogue on a more frequent basis. This would further enhance inter-agency coordination of space applications activities.

As part of the international space information service, and in response to the request of the Working Group of the Whole of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, the Office submitted two technical studies this year, "Basic space science in developing countries" and "The use of new technologies in satellite communications and information networks". These two studies are contained in documents A/AC.105/664 and 665. They were submitted to outside experts for review prior to publication, and we would like to thank those

experts for providing this valuable service at no cost to the Office.

Information on the space activities of Member States is contained in documents A/AC.105/661/Add.1 and Add.2, which were submitted to the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee. In response to the request by the Subcommittee and its Working Group of the Whole, reports on national and international space activities have been submitted by 26 countries. These reports contain information on spin-offs, resources and capabilities of States in space activities for the promotion of cooperation, and other activities which could be the subject of greater international cooperation. In response to the Subcommittee's request in 1996, Member States submitted their reports on national and international research concerning the safety of orbiting space objects with nuclear power sources on board, and the collision of those objects with space debris. Member States also submitted information on the development of technology for monitoring space debris: those reports and information are contained in document A/AC.105/659, Add.1 and Add.2. Updated information on various steps taken by space agencies for reducing the growth or damage potential of space debris was also submitted to the Subcommittee in document A/AC.105/663.

During the 1997 session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, a number of technical presentations were made by experts, which provided the Subcommittee with valuable information on the latest developments in space applications. Due to the importance of those technical presentations, the Office prepared a summary of them for distribution to this Committee, as contained in document A/AC.105/673.

I will briefly review the Office's cooperation with other international and regional organizations over the past year. The coordination of space activities within the United Nations system is conducted through the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities, referred to earlier. The annual meeting allows all interested organizations of the United Nations system to exchange information on planned space-related activities, and to coordinate those activities. In this way, the Meeting aims to prevent the duplication of work, and to identify activities which could be carried out through joint inter-agency efforts. Further enhancement of this coordination is anticipated in view of the expanded use of Internet.

At this year's session (which concluded last Friday), the meeting finalized and adopted the Secretary-General's report on coordination of space activities within the United Nations system for 1997, 1998 and

future years. This report, together with the report of the meeting itself, will be made available to you during the session of the Committee.

The Office for Outer Space Affairs continued its close cooperation with the Committee on Space Research (COSPAR) and the International Astronautical Federation (IAF), and I would like to express our appreciation for their generous support over the last year. With the assistance of COSPAR and IAF we have again issued the publication "Highlights in space", which is before the Committee in document A/AC.105/654. This publication contains the report submitted by COSPAR on progress in space research, and the report by IAF on space science and applications. With reference to the section on space law in this publication, input was provided by the International Institute of Space Law.

At the invitation of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and in cooperation with the Office, COSPAR and IAF also organized a technical symposium on the theme fixed by the Subcommittee at this year's session for special attention: space systems for direct broadcasting and global information systems for space research. They enlisted some of the foremost experts in the rapidly developing fields of satellite direct broadcasting and global information systems, and the presentations were both timely and highly informative. The summary of these presentations is contained in document A/AC.105/673.

In cooperation with the IAF, prior to the annual IAF Congress held in Beijing in October 1996, the Office again organized a workshop to address the needs of developing countries under the theme "Education awareness, space technology and applications in the developing world". The workshop was co-sponsored by the United Nations, IAF and ESA, and was organized with the invaluable support of the Government of China. This was the sixth in an ongoing series of such activities for developing countries, and the Office is now in the process of organizing the seventh workshop to be held prior to the 1997 IAF Congress in Turin, Italy, for which we are counting on the strong support of the Government of Italy.

In cooperation with COSPAR, the Office organized a Panel on Space Science in Developing Countries during the Assembly of COSPAR held in Birmingham in July 1996. The Panel reviewed space education developments in different parts of the world. In accordance with an agreement of the Panel, a workshop on data analysis techniques will be held in Brazil in November this year, to be organized under the auspices

of COSPAR and the United Nations Office on Outer Space Affairs, in cooperation with the newly established United Nations affiliated Centre for Space Science and Technology Education in Latin America and the Caribbean. The workshop is designed to expose participants to the access, analysis and interpretation of data acquired by Earth observation satellites.

In addition to other offices and departments within the organizations of the United Nations system and the international organizations mentioned above, a number of governmental and non-governmental organizations provided generous support for the activities of the Programme on Space Applications. I would like to express our deep appreciation to all those organizations and once again to ESA, and in particular the staff of the International Relations Department, headed by Mr. Giampalmo, for continuing the tradition of providing vital financial and technical assistance for the Programme. The European Space Agency and United Nations working partnership with the developing countries has been an important component of international cooperation in the field of space, and we look forward to continuing that cooperation with ESA under the leadership of Mr. Giampalmo, who has recently taken over the ESA international programme. I would like to welcome him to the Committee, and wish him a successful tenure in his new capacity.

I would like to assure the Committee of our commitment to further enhancing cooperation and coordination with other international and regional organizations, particularly in fulfilling the task entrusted to us by the General Assembly to serve as the Executive Secretariat for the UNISPACE III Conference. We are pleased that the Advisory Committee was able to finalize the form, venue, date, participation, provisional annotated agenda and the additional components of the Conference, to assist this Committee, in its role as the Preparatory Committee, for consideration and adoption at the present session. On the basis of those recommendations, the Secretariat has already put in motion the preliminary preparations for the Conference, which is scheduled to take place from 19 to 30 July 1999 in Vienna.

At the session of the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities held last week, attended by key organizations within the United Nations system in the field of space-related activities, I am pleased to report that the Office was requested to convey to the Preparatory Committee of UNISPACE III the willingness and intention of the organizations of the United Nations system to contribute to the attainment of the objectives of

the Conference. The Meeting also agreed that it would be desirable to have a theme for UNISPACE III, and suggested that the Preparatory Committee might wish to consider the theme "Space benefits for humanity in the twenty-first century". The Meeting further agreed to recommend that particular attention be paid in the agenda of the Conference to enhancing the use of space-based information and communications technology in order to strengthen operational global observing systems so that they may become more effective in the twenty-first century. Another priority area identified by the Meeting for consideration by the Committee is the promotion of the wider use of space technologies in the prevention and mitigation of the effects of natural and technological disasters, the provision of relief, and the monitoring of environmental changes at the global level.

Based on the further recommendations and decisions to be made by this Committee at the current session, the Office is prepared to organize regional meetings for UNISPACE III in cooperation with other United Nations bodies, in particular the regional economic commissions and other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, in such a way as to best achieve the objectives of the Conference. To assist the work of the Advisory Committee and the Preparatory Committee, the Office has also prepared a list of background papers which will cover the substantive agenda items of the Conference (document A/AC.105/1997/CRP.4). The Office will also invite organizations of the United Nations system, as well as other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations with space-related activities, to contribute the benefit of their expertise to producing these background papers.

In addition to the report on matters concerning the planning and execution of the special session of the Committee, UNISPACE III, as contained in document A/AC.105/662, and supplementary information to that report (document A/AC.105/C.1/1997/CRP.8), which were submitted to the Advisory Committee, I hope the information contained therein will facilitate the work of the Preparatory Committee in planning for the Conference in the most effective and efficient manner possible. The Office has taken note of the agreement of this Committee to make every effort to limit the costs of the Conference within existing resources for the Committee and its Secretariat. On the assumption that the same level of resources as in the current biennium will be available for the next biennium (i.e. 1998-1999), every effort will be made to keep the cost of the Conference within the resources available. We are of course looking to Member States and space agencies to provide us with

short-term experts and other support to assist us in the work of the Conference. I would urge those who may be interested to give some thought to providing experts to the Secretariat to assist in preparations for the Conference.

In order to minimize the costs of the Conference while at the same time taking into account the recommendations of the Advisory Committee concerning its organization and associated activities, efforts will be made to limit the use of the Austria Center, where the Conference will be held, by using the facilities in the Vienna International Centre (VIC) to the fullest extent possible. Due to the slightly different configuration of the Conference, pending the final arrangements, there may be some nominal additional costs as concerns equipment transfer, security services, and some conference services and clerical assistance costs during the actual Conference. The space exhibition will be organized on a commercial basis in a new exhibit hall to be opened at the Austria Center prior to UNISPACE III.

As concerns the permanent space exhibit at the Vienna International Centre, the Office continued to expand this exhibition of space-related items, which emphasizes international cooperation in space activities and focuses on the practical uses of space technology, particularly for environmental monitoring and natural resource management. It is housed in the VIC visitors' building, in G-Building, on the fifth floor, and is viewed by approximately 70,000 visitors annually. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all Member States and international organizations which have provided material for the permanent exhibit, and if other governments are interested we are always willing and pleased to accommodate such exhibits. For those who may not have visited the exhibit, it has recently been refurbished and is open for visitors.

As the United Nations continues to review its entire work programme and prepares its scenario for reform and restructuring under the leadership of the new Secretary-General, the Office is well aware of its responsibility to further increase its efficiency and effectiveness in implementing the programme on the peaceful uses of outer space. The Office is prepared to be an "idea generator" for the United Nations Organization, suggesting innovative ways and means to further streamline work while maximizing the quality of services. This was the case with the adoption of the use of unedited verbatim transcripts by the Committee and its Legal Subcommittee, as well as the new format for convening a global United Nations conference. The contributions of the Office were recognized by the

United Nations Efficiency Board, which was established to conduct the efficiency review and to monitor the implementation of its recommendations. The results of the Organization-wide efficiency review were published in the report "United Nations 21: Better service, better value, better management".

I am happy to report that the efficiency review team of the Office was selected as one of the best five team — the only one outside United Nations Headquarters in New York recognized for the concrete results achieved to enhance efficiency and effectiveness. A number of recommendations made by the team include those to direct more resources to priority areas of activity, as identified by Member States, and to further enhance the information services and inter-agency coordination by the expanded use of available advanced information technologies. In order to face the challenges of the coming years in fulfilling its mandated task in a changing world, the Office considers it essential to maintain close contact with Member States. The Office therefore welcomes any suggestions and ideas concerning how it can best serve Member States. As Kofi Annan, the new Secretary-General, has emphasized, the United Nations needs to work in partnership with Member States.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much for your excellent and informative statement. I am sure that all here present will join me in commending the excellent work which you and your Office is doing. I would also like to thank you for your kind words addressed to the new Bureau — and I would like to take this opportunity to thank the distinguished representatives of Brazil, India and Germany for their kind words addressed to the new Bureau yesterday.

We will now continue our debate on agenda item 5.

General exchange of views (cont.)

The CHAIRMAN: The first speaker on my list is the distinguished representative of France.

Mr. P. LOUET (France) (*interpretation from French*): My delegation is particularly happy to welcome you to the Chair of this Committee. For many years you have led the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and you have made that body both effective and highly renowned — ideal qualifications for your present post as our Chairman.

To justify a change in the Bureau of our Committee, reference has been made to geographical rotation, but I think that another kind of rotation was also envisaged. At a time when space activities are growing in their importance, it is perhaps the moment to have someone of scientific repute succeed a series of extremely talented diplomats. For 17 years you have been a member of the Committee, so we have all come to know you; you have been at the very origin of UNISPACE III, which is an important agenda item of our current session. In France we know you well, as thanks to you, ISRO has been a valuable partner of CNES. Your experience in the field of international cooperation covers both its theoretical and practical side, making you a perfect candidate for the head of a Committee whose major role is to promote international cooperation in outer space activities. As the Committee looks for a new thrust for its activities, having you as its Chairman will guarantee the continued excellent reputation of COPUOS.

I would like to say a few words about Ambassador Hohenfellner. My delegation regrets his departure as we have always admired his professional and efficient guidance of our work in addition to his many other commitments. We owe him our gratitude for the time and effort he has dedicated to COPUOS — and finally, the package proposal leading to the new composition of the Bureau. The Committee will also be revitalized thanks to the new working methods introduced.

I would like to briefly touch on the issue of consensus, already referred to, and which is of prime importance. This has always been the basis of the work of our Committee; the free consent of all parties is a prerequisite for the success of our work. The new working methods should be applied with a degree of flexibility, provided that consensus is always uppermost in our thoughts.

At this point in our debate, most delegations list their activities in the field of space over the past 12 months. My delegation has criticized this pattern as we feel this takes up too much of the Committee's time. You will therefore find all the relevant information on space activities of France in document A/AC.105/661/Add.2. However, I would like to draw the Committee's attention to one aspect of our space activity which should be highlighted. In 1996, France spent FF 12 billion in the field of outer space activities, and the portion of that which was devoted to international cooperation programmes, including those involving the USA, represents just over FF 9 billion, some 75 per cent

of the budget. Within the strategic plan implemented by CNES this year, cooperation with international partners is being pursued bilaterally and with the ESA. This demonstrates the importance we attach to international cooperation in outer space activities, and in this same spirit, this year we adopted the declaration on international cooperation with Germany. These activities support our proposal concerning possible themes for inclusion on the agenda of UNISPACE III.

As concerns UNISPACE III, my delegation believes we now have a general framework which has allowed us to reach agreement on an annotated provisional agenda which will include discussions on the application of space technologies, and to look at future workplans in the area of provision of information, research and training. During UNISPACE III we must examine exactly where we stand, and with the approach of the new millennium we must try to look at the situation from a scientific perspective. Public awareness must be enhanced, as well as that of decision makers in the field of space and its applications. UNISPACE III will only be successful if it triggers the necessary technical debates and not merely political debate, which might more suitably take place in other forums.

With reference to the recent meetings of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and the Legal Subcommittee, the work of the former as regards space debris is making good progress. Cooperation with the Inter-Agency Space Debris Coordination Committee (IADC) will help us reach a better understanding of this subject. The Legal Subcommittee will then be given the necessary information to allow them to address this topic, especially in the areas of prevention and responsibility.

As concerns health, telemedicine and technological activities in outer space, my country is making extensive efforts in cooperation with the Russian Federation and the United States. In a few months' time, Léopold Eyharts will be on board the Mir space station (the Pegasus mission), followed by Jean-Loup Chrétien, who will be on board the American shuttle STS-86 mission, to help prepare the programme for the International Space Station.

Two main topics were before the Legal Subcommittee: the first was divided into two parts, the delimitation of outer space and the use of the geostationary satellite orbit. On the first point, my delegation continues to believe that we should not pursue a fruitless examination of something which has implications on space law itself. On the second point, the German delegation, taking due account of the work done

by the delegation of Colombia, presented a draft resolution requesting the ITU to guarantee equitable access to geostationary satellite orbital resources and access to the radiofrequency spectrum. We support this approach, as we would like to finalize a discussion which has been going on for over 20 years. There seems little point in adopting a text which, in a spirit of compromise, falls under the purview of ITU.

My final comment refers to the hours we have taken up in discussing the geostationary orbit and the delimitation of outer space. My delegation feels the time allotted to the Legal Subcommittee should be better utilized; the rapid evolution of new technologies and organization of space activities allows for new legal instruments to emerge in the foreseeable future. We would like to contribute to this, and we intend to continue our work in this direction on subjects which we consider of priority importance for the future, along with our partners within ESA.

My delegation reserves its right to speak again once we begin our more detailed discussion of the agenda items before us.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your very lucid statement, and for your kind words addressed to the Chair and the new Bureau members. The next speaker on my list is the distinguished ambassador of Bolivia, who will speak on behalf of the Latin American and Caribbean Group of States.

Mr. E. MEYER MEDINA (Observer, Bolivia) (*interpretation from Spanish*): I am honoured to make this statement on behalf of the Latin American and Caribbean Group. First of all, I would like to congratulate you and the other members of the Bureau on your well-deserved election. I am sure that with your assistance the Committee will achieve excellent results and I am pleased to see you guiding these important discussions. It is also an honour for our region that the First Vice-Chairman, Ambassador González, is a distinguished representative of GRULAC. His professionalism, experience and knowledge of this subject are well known to all here present.

GRULAC would like to express its deep appreciation to Ambassador Hohenfellner, in particular for the way in which he has presided over the inter-sessional informal consultations on the working methods of COPUOS. GRULAC played an active role in those meetings and made constructive contributions to reaching a solution which is acceptable to all members of the Committee.

We are very happy that on 11 May 1997, the Governments of Brazil and Mexico signed an agreement to set up the regional centre for space science and technology education. This centre will be of benefit to our countries as it will help to strengthen our national capacities in this field, to promote the exchange of information, and will also promote the coordination of space activities among Member States. The Latin American countries have a keen and genuine interest in the centre's activities.

As concerns UNISPACE III, GRULAC welcomes the progress achieved in the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, where an agreement was reached on the objectives of the Conference, its format, venue and date, as well as the provisional agenda, an outline of substantive items for discussion, and also its financial implications. International cooperation, the strengthening of national capacities, space law, and training of professionals from developing countries are all subjects which are of major interest to our region and which will be the subject of discussions during UNISPACE III.

When preparing recommendations and the plan of action for the Conference, GRULAC believes it is necessary for participants to take account of the Declaration on International Cooperation in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space for the Benefit and in the Interests of all States, taking into particular account the Needs of Developing Countries, as approved by the General Assembly in resolution 51/122 of 13 December 1996. GRULAC is very interested in all the preparatory work within COPUOS for the holding of UNISPACE III, and of particular interest to our region is the United Nations regional conference in Latin America and the Caribbean on space technology and its applications for development. The countries of the region believe that this regional conference will greatly assist the process of preparation to be conducted prior to UNISPACE III. We would appreciate it if the report of the third space Conference of the Americas, which outlines the region's position, could be annexed to the Committee's report, as it represents a contribution to the ongoing process of preparation for UNISPACE III.

In light of recent events in our region, and bearing in mind the importance of nuclear power sources in outer space, GRULAC wishes to make an emphatic appeal for all countries to respect the Principles Relating to the Use of Nuclear Power Sources in Outer Space, as approved by the General Assembly in 1992. States who launch space objects with nuclear power sources on board must assume the responsibilities related thereto, in accordance with Articles 8 and 9 of the Principles.

In conformity with the position which GRULAC has maintained throughout the inter-sessional informal consultations on working methods of the Committee, it is our view that the agenda of the Legal Subcommittee needs additional topics for discussion, and we therefore support the proposal by the Mexican delegation to include the item "Review of the status of the five international treaties governing outer space" on its agenda for future sessions. However, GRULAC is not in agreement with the removal of the item on the geostationary orbit from its agenda. To do so would be incompatible with the position which our Group maintained during the informal consultations; we must continue to analyse this matter in the Committee.

In conclusion, the member countries of GRULAC are extremely interested in the subjects for discussion during this session, and accordingly are always prepared to cooperate with the Bureau and other members of the Committee with a view to ensuring a successful conclusion of this session.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your statement and for your kind words addressed to the Chair and the new Bureau members. The next speaker on my list is the distinguished representative of Italy.

Ms. G. ARRIGO (Italy): I would like to wish the new Bureau every success in the work which lies ahead of them. My delegation offers its full support to Professor Rao, and we are sure that under his chairmanship the Committee will progress. We express our appreciation at the inclusion of the subject of a reduction in the duration of the sessions of the Committee and its Subcommittees in the Chairman's package proposal.

Firstly, I would like to invite all delegations here present to Italy on the occasion of the annual meeting of space experts, scientists and policy-makers, the 48th International Astronautical Congress, to be held in Turin from 6 to 10 October 1997. My delegation wants to promote the access of all to international cooperation, and in this context we believe this forum will be a further step towards achieving the respective goals in space research development and international cooperation.

I would like to draw delegates' attention to the Joint United Nations/IAF Workshop on Space Applications for the Benefit of Developing Countries, which will take place in Turin from 2 to 5 October 1997. My country is pleased to support and contribute to the success of this initiative to expand the interrelationship of various space programmes and projects. The Fifth

Space Agencies Forum (SAF) meeting will also take place in Turin on 7 October, co-chaired by the Presidents of the Italian Space Agency and the China National Space Administration. All of you are invited to Turin to promote and examine programmes on outer space and its applications.

I would like to give a brief review of Italy's achievements in space this year. Next August, on board a US shuttle, the Ultraviolet Spectrograph Telescope for Astronomical Research (UVSTAR) developed with the joint cooperation of NASA and ASI, will be launched. On 6 October, the Cassini/Huygens planetary mission will commence; this is designed to send an orbiter spacecraft to the planet Saturn. Italy is contributing to the Cassini mission by way of bilateral cooperation between the Italian Space Agency and NASA. It has also provided a major investigatory instrument to ESA's Huygens probe, the Atmospheric Structure Instrument (HASI); during the descent in Titan's atmosphere, this will provide accurate measurements of pressure, temperature, winds, electrical characteristics, detection of lightning, and surface profiles from the elaboration of the Huygens radar altimeter data.

As concerns our involvement with the International Space Station (ISS), the Italian Government has started the necessary internal approval procedures and hopes to sign the agreement this year. The Italian scientific community is training with a view to joining the new system on board the ISS in the field of manned space flights, robotics, life sciences, astronautics, microgravity, etc. An agreement has been finalized between the Italian Space Agency and ESA on the management, execution and funding of the Node 2 and 3 projects for ISS, approved by NASA. An Italian astronaut, Umberto Guidoni, is currently training at the NASA Johnson Space Center, and he will fly in the first crew of the ISS.

My delegation is pleased to announce the most recent astronomical discovery with the Beppo Sax Italian satellite. The Beppo Sax satellite, for X-ray astronomy, was produced by ASI in collaboration with the Dutch Agency for Space Programmes, and was successfully launched on 30 April 1996. The satellite has given the international scientific community important information to help resolve one of the greatest mysteries of modern astrophysics. For many years, astronomers have known of the existence of sudden bursts of gamma rays from an unknown class of celestial sources. These sources appear unexpectedly from any direction in the sky, and generally last only a few seconds, rather like cosmic fireworks. Until now, no observation has been able to

simultaneously localize an emission at other wavelengths, for example optical or radio, even though tremendous efforts to do so have been made over the past 25 years. This is why astronomers have been unable to discover the origin of these gamma-ray bursts.

Beppo Sax was able to detect, for the first time ever, an X-ray emission from the source producing the gamma-ray bursts, localizing the source in the sky with unprecedented precision. Consequently, major world-wide observatories have been observing the zone from which the gamma-rays have been seen, in the hope of discovering the type of astronomical object that produces the burst, and thus resolving the mystery of gamma-ray bursts.

Further international cooperation is already under way, such as that of the China-Italian Committee on the development of common space research, ongoing cooperation with Russia on the Pelikan/Jericho programme with Mir, the collaboration on the spectrum X-gamma programme that will be launched next year, cooperation on the Pamela Project in the astrophysics programmes, and other cooperative arrangements involving life sciences. Other possibilities for bilateral cooperation are being evaluated with developing countries, for example with Brazil, Argentina and Ukraine.

As concerns the application of the recommendations of UNISPACE 82 and, in particular, the establishment of the networks of space science and technology education institutions in the framework of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications, the Italian Space Agency is pleased to announce its support for this initiative. Under the aegis of the United Nations, it will promote and finalize, with other countries concerned, an agreement for the establishment of a Central Eastern and South Eastern European centre for research, education and applications projects in space science and technology. In cooperating with the Italian Space Agency, the Italian authorities are evaluating the possibility to cooperate with ESA in a COPINE project, based on a proposal by the Office for Outer Space Affairs, which will address the needs of African countries. The internal processes for attaining the consent of the authorities concerned have already been set in motion.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your statement and also for expressing your support to the new Bureau. The next speaker on my list is the distinguished representative of the Czech Republic.

Mr. L. PEREK (Czech Republic): May I take this opportunity to congratulate you on your election as Chairman of the Committee. Your interest and vast experience in outer space matters is well known and justifies our anticipation of a successful session under your guidance. My delegation wishes to make its contribution to fruitful discussions.

The Committee has adopted new working methods and a new procedure for the election of its Bureau. As we can see, the introduction of this new system has been very smooth, which speaks well for all delegations. But let us not forget the important role played in this process by our former Chairman, Ambassador Hohenfellner. Over the past year he convened several inter-sessional informal consultations and guided us to a solution acceptable to all. He prepared a proposal which was adopted by consensus, an important principle of the work of this Committee. I would like to express our most sincere thanks to him: we now reap the benefit of his efforts.

COPUOS is supposed to be the focal point for international cooperation in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space, and to maintain close contact with governmental and non-governmental organizations concerned with outer space matters. My delegation is satisfied with the information received on a regular basis from the specialized agencies, in particular the ITU, which is concerned both with space applications and with the regulation of specific space activities.

However, we note that COPUOS does not receive information on the activities of one body in the United Nations which is concerned with outer space, namely the Conference on Disarmament, which is concerned with different aspects of outer space to those of our own Committee, but sometimes in a wider context than disarmament. COPUOS has never been informed of such deliberations although they may indeed have touched on the subject of the peaceful uses of outer space. We do not propose to deal with matters in this Committee which pertain to the Conference on Disarmament, but as a focal point, my delegation feels that COPUOS should have as much relevant information as possible before it.

As concerns agenda items, my delegation appreciates the work carried out by the Office for Outer Space Affairs and the United Nations Programme on Space Applications. In particular, we refer here to the eight volumes of the seminars of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications; the series of annual "Highlights in space: Progress in space science,

technology and applications, prepared by the IAF and COSPAR, and the series of reports on the UN/ESA/IAF workshops, organized by OOSA. This all provides a wealth of up-to-date and authoritative information on space applications, and will doubtless prove invaluable at a time when preparations for UNISPACE III are under way.

Significant progress has been made in the last session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, in particular on the item concerning space debris. The technical presentations made by eminent experts in the field were of a very high quality, giving long-range perspectives of the development of the debris population. My delegation welcomes the adoption, by space agencies in launching countries who participate in the Inter-Agency Coordination Committee (IADC), of measures to restrict the amount of debris to be generated in the future. The main feature of this is that it was agreed on a voluntary basis and the measures have already been put into operation. We look forward to hearing a report on further progress from the representative of the IADC next year. In 1998 the technical report on space debris should be finalized; in 1999, the Subcommittee will doubtless focus its attention on UNISPACE III, thus leaving only limited time available to deal with other matters. The technical report on space debris is vital, as it will provide a solid basis upon which this Committee can make a decision on the future course of action.

This session of the Committee also sees us acting as the Preparatory Committee for UNISPACE III. The Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, in its role as Advisory Committee, prepared proposals for nearly all aspects of the Conference at its last session. My delegation in general supports these proposals, in particular the emphasis placed on space applications. We are also interested in those components of UNISPACE III which allow selected non-governmental organizations to play a role.

Regarding the work of the Legal Subcommittee, my delegation will make a statement at the appropriate time.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your informative statement and the kind words addressed to the new Bureau. The next speaker on my list is the distinguished representative of Sweden.

Mr. A. WERNHOFF (Sweden): First of all, I would like to convey my delegation's sincere congratulations to you as the new Chairman of the

Committee. May I take this opportunity to congratulate Ambassador González and Professor Kabbaj on their election as First Vice-Chairman and Rapporteur, respectively. My delegation is pleased to see Professor Rex and Mr. Mikulka re-elected as Chairmen of the Scientific and Technical and Legal Subcommittees. Through the Chair, I would like to forward my delegation's sincere appreciation for the work done by the former Bureau of the Committee, Ambassador Hohenfellner, Mr. Mazilu and Mr. Telles Ribeiro.

We are equally indebted to the dedicated work of Dr. Jasentuliyana and the staff of the Office for Outer Space Affairs, and especially the Expert on Space Applications, Dr. Abiodun. Sweden takes great pleasure in cooperating with the Secretariat through our close association with the Programme on Space Applications. There has been a particularly successful series of international training courses on remote sensing education for educators, jointly organized by Sweden and the United Nations. The seventh such course, hosted by the Department of Physical Geography of Stockholm University and the Swedish Space Corporation, is currently being held in Stockholm and Kiruna.

My delegation would like to stress the importance it attaches to the work of COPUOS and its Subcommittees. These bodies are invaluable forums for scientific, technical and legal deliberations, and exchange of information and experiences on current space activities at the international level. Over the last 12 months Ambassador Hohenfellner has carried out informal consultations in order to render more effective the working methods of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies. We welcome the agreement that has been reached, and believe that the framework outlined in the Chairman's package proposal will help to strengthen and revitalize our Committee. My delegation would like to thank Ambassador Hohenfellner for the dedicated work he has carried out to finalize this agreement. Concerning the duration of sessions, my delegation feels that the proposal to institute a new meeting pattern, which should total 5½ weeks each year, represents a good first step in the process of creating more streamlined and cost-effective working practices.

The Scientific and Technical Subcommittee continued its consideration of the agenda item on space debris as a priority. My delegation notes with satisfaction the process outlined in the multi-year workplan, with special attention focused this year on modelling the space debris environment and risk assessment. Cooperation with the IADC is promising, and we are grateful that the technical expertise of the IADC is made available to the

Subcommittee. Our thanks go to the Secretariat for preparing a report on various steps taken by space agencies to reduce the growth or potential damage of space debris. These efforts, together with an annually updated report by the Subcommittee, constitute a sound basis for the finalization of the Subcommittee's report on space debris in 1999.

An item of major importance in our deliberations this year will be further preparations for UNISPACE III. Considerable progress has already been achieved in the Working Group within the Subcommittee, and my delegation welcomes the special attention paid to the role of space science and technology in relation to the environment. Earth observation applications, as well as competence building, can make a significant contribution to the pursuit of sustainable development.

As concerns the work of the Legal Subcommittee, my delegation would like to mention three matters. Firstly, we note with appreciation the adoption by the General Assembly of the "Declaration on International Cooperation in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space for the Benefit and in the Interests of all States, taking into particular account the Needs of Developing Countries". Secondly, we welcome the working paper submitted by Germany this year on agenda item 4. The proposed draft resolution – whereby the issue of equitable access to the geostationary satellite orbit/radiofrequency spectrum resources should be dealt with by the ITU – constitutes a constructive and creative way to deal with this topic. Consideration of this item in the Legal Subcommittee could then be deferred until the year 2000, after UNISPACE III.

Lastly, my delegation notes with interest the decision of the Legal Subcommittee to recommend inclusion of a new item on its agenda. The proposal submitted by Mexico, "Review of the status of the five international treaties governing outer space", could well constitute a good basis for discussion of the different aspects related to the implementation of these instruments. It is our understanding that this initiative should not lead to reopening of substantive debate on the treaties, or any proposals for their revision or amendment.

This year, COPUOS celebrates its fortieth session; the Outer Space Treaty also celebrates its thirtieth anniversary. Therefore 1997 represents another historical year for the Committee. It is our common responsibility to rise to the occasion, meet expectations and pave the way for future global cooperation in outer space affairs.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your report and your kind wishes expressed to the new members of the Bureau. The next speaker on my list is the distinguished representative of Spain.

Mr. A. ORTIZ GARCIA (Spain) (*interpretation from Spanish*): My delegation would like to express its warmest congratulations to the new Bureau and to wish them every success during the three years in which they will preside over the work of the Committee. In particular we would like to express our appreciation to Ambassador Hohenfellner for all his work as former Chairman of the Committee. We welcome you as our new Chairman, as well as Ambassador González, whom we know very well, and Professor Kabbaj from Morocco, a neighbour of Spain.

I will focus my statement on three points of major interest, which are included on the Committee's agenda. The first refers to the election of the new Bureau and the working methods of the Committee. My delegation believes that the new system of election and the consequent rebuilding of the Committee is of great importance in revitalizing the Committee. COPUOS, which came into being during a time of confrontation and the cold war, reached a delicate political agreement with the previous system of chairmanships. Now we have moved away from confrontation to cooperation, and it is therefore logical that COPUOS should bring itself into line as concerns its composition with other United Nations bodies by electing its officers in accordance with appropriate geographic rotation.

As concerns working methods, my delegation considers that we have made positive progress, including the replacement of summary records by unedited verbatim transcripts, and the adaptation of the length of meetings of the Committee and its Subcommittees in line with the burden of work. We have progressed, but we must not lose this impetus and must continue in the same manner. My delegation has always maintained that COPUOS should be reformed with the full participation of Member States, and not by those from outside the Committee. We therefore hope these innovations will continue, thus ensuring that COPUOS becomes the pioneering committee for reform and a reference point within the United Nations system.

My delegation accords special importance to UNISPACE III, which requires careful organization. It must be focused on specific points rather than general theoretical speeches. UNISPACE III will thus represent a landmark in international United Nations conferences with a new, more practical and useful format, unlike

some conferences in the past which were unfocused in terms of their organization, length and objectives. The Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, the Committee itself and the Secretariat must focus their efforts on this task when making preparations for the Conference, and not waste time on items which have been on the agenda for many years and are of lower priority.

My delegation also attaches great importance to the participation of international space agencies and private industry in UNISPACE III. These bodies can introduce new visions and make an important contribution to the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes. Spain is ready to cooperate enthusiastically to ensure that the Conference is a success.

Finally, I would like to refer to item 10 of our agenda, "Spin-off benefits of space technology: Review of current status". In this connection, I am pleased to announce that the Spanish mini-satellite MINISAT-01 was successfully launched from Spain on 21 April 1997, using a Pegasus rocket from a Lockheed L-1011 aircraft, flying at an altitude of 11,000 metres over the south of Gran Canaria, at 11.59 GMT. MINISAT-01 is a hexagonal shape, 1 metre wide and 1½ metres long, weighing 200 kilos, and is now in orbit at an altitude of some 600 km; the planned scientific experiments have been initiated and are being carried out. My delegation hopes that the Spanish National Aerospace Technology Institute, which designed and built the mini-satellite, will make a brief statement on this launching under the appropriate agenda item, as we hope it will prove of interest for other delegations.

In conclusion, my delegation hopes that the outcome of our meetings will be successful. Peace is a gift from heaven, and we trust that outer space, which from our childhood days we always said was in the heavens above, may contribute to peace between peoples and allow us to share the benefits of space research.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your statement and for the kind congratulatory words addressed to the new Bureau. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of the Ukraine.

Mr. E. KUZNETSOV (Ukraine) (*interpretation from Russian*): My delegation would like to extend our best wishes for the success of the fortieth session of COPUOS. We are sure that the work of this Committee at the current session will provide a useful basis to serve the welfare of all mankind.

My delegation would like to congratulate Professor Rao, Ambassador González and Professor Kabbaj upon their election to the new Bureau. We are convinced that under the new Bureau, our work will be given new impetus so that it is more concentrated, more effective, and will produce good results.

The following developments have taken place in the Ukraine in the field of outer space activities. This year we have concluded the first Ukraine outer space programme, thanks to which the development of this sector has been very successful. More than 100 organizations and scientific institutes have been working in this area, and an institute has been created which brings together the main enterprises involved in outer space technology. A ground infrastructure complementing the spectrum of outer space programmes for the Ukraine and other countries has been formed, and a successful [transport system?] for outer space activities has also been developed.

Over the past five years, 43 missiles such as [Cyclone?] have been launched; a wide-ranging programme for Sich, including the centre for the management, collection and processing of information on outer space activities, as well as the launching of Sich-1, took place in 1995, and another launch is planned for 1998.

Our national legislation concerning activities in outer space has been drawn up, and a package of legal standard-setting norms to regulate outer space activity has been adopted. We hope that a Ukrainian researcher/cosmonaut will soon be flying with a United States crew on board the spacecraft Columbia. According to an agreement made with colleagues at NASA, he will perform a series of experiments on board the shuttle relating to botanics and biology. We are working successfully with other States on joint programmes of scientific research, such as Mars, Spectre, Alert, GLOBALSTAR, etc. Work is being carried out according to some 100 international contracts in the space sector.

At the threshold of the new millennium, the main thrust of Ukraine outer space activities to the year 2010 has been developed. In the new outer space programme, nine spacecraft are scheduled to be launched between now and 2002. Two remote sensing satellites will also be launched, as well as three scientific satellites and three micro-satellites. In cooperation with the Russian Federation we have worked on the conversion of strategic missiles, such as the CC-18, converting them

into civilian commercial launchers and actively developing a whole series of outer space micro-satellites.

The President of the Ukraine recently announced that by the year 2000, there will be a total demilitarization of the structure which services our outer space agency activities. The Ukraine has always tried to develop all its technologies in line with world-wide systems, so that it can be used by other States and individuals. For example, in the C-START programme, one of the most advanced [automatic start prepared environmentally clean?] launch vehicles, the Zenith, will be prepared in joint collaboration with the Russian Federation, and will be developed by United States and Norwegian companies.

The Ukraine has a national centre for the management and testing of outer space resources, which we propose should be the centre for international coordination of outer space activities. Special emphasis will be given to the exploitation of outer space in the interests of users. My delegation believes that outer space activities should be as transparent and open as possible and should enhance the quality of life for all. This programme will be linked closely with programmes of other countries, and with project which fall under the aegis of the United Nations. Ukrainian researchers are playing a responsible role in the Alert project, and are working closely with colleagues on Earth remote sensing programmes.

Unfortunately, having declared our intention to collaborate with the United Nations on a programme on the threshold of the third millennium, we have encountered certain financial difficulties in that regard. We appreciate the great efforts involved in the preparations for UNISPACE III and we will therefore have to review the timing of this work, which might now be scheduled for May 2000.

My delegation reiterates its satisfaction to see you in the Chair of this meeting, and hopes that developments in space will meet with success. We will thus be able to enhance the quality of life on Earth, as well as to enhance our awareness of the internationality of difficulties encountered and their relation with outer space. Work carried out by both researchers and engineers will help to promote the welfare of all mankind, which will enhance cooperation on a global scale.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your statement and for your kind words addressed to the new Bureau. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Ecuador.

Mr. L. ARIZAGA (Ecuador) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Firstly, my delegation wishes to congratulate Ambassador Hohenfellner on the achievements made by this Committee under his chairmanship. Although at times there were some differences and divergencies of opinion on certain items, the overall results of the past few years have been positive. We would also like to congratulate the new members of the Bureau; we are pleased to see the distinguished representatives of India, Chile and Morocco, all developing countries, leading the work of this Committee.

My delegation fully endorses the statement made by the ambassador of Brazil, as Chairman of the Group of 77, and by the ambassador of Bolivia, as Chairman of GRULAC.

As concerns UNISPACE III, my delegation believes it is important that the Conference is properly prepared with the active participation of all involved, and thus achieve results which will be of benefit to all countries, and especially the developing countries. Joint efforts must be made to ensure the success of the Conference, and that the outcome will be relevant in the short term. My country is particularly interested in the holding of the regional conference, which will make it possible for our region to make proper preparations for UNISPACE III. At the regional conference, the Office for Outer Space Affairs must play a major support role. Ecuador is pleased to note the agreement reached by Brazil and Mexico for the establishment of the regional centre for space science and technology education. We are convinced that this centre will strengthen the national programmes of the countries in our region.

My delegation would like to recall the achievements of this Committee as concerns its working methods, namely the agreement on the composition of the Bureau, the structure of the agenda and the duration of sessions. The new working methods will make it possible to address agenda items in a positive way and to identify clear parameters of work for the years to come. With regard to the use of nuclear power sources in outer space, my delegation endorses the statement of the Chairman of GRULAC and believes it is important that the relevant Principles are strictly complied with.

My delegation will speak at a later stage on the subject of the geostationary orbit.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your statement and for your kind words addressed to the new members of the Bureau. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Argentina.

Ms. C. LOPEZ MONJA (Argentina) (*interpretation from Spanish*): My delegation would like to express its appreciation for the work carried out by the members of the outgoing Bureau. I will not refer here to the many achievements under the chairmanship of Ambassador Hohenfellner, but I would like to emphasize the patient, constant and flexible efforts made in addressing the new working methods of COPUOS. That work has resulted in the composition of a new Bureau on the basis of equitable geographical representation. I would like to endorse statements made by other distinguished delegations to wish every success, and give the full support of my delegation, to the leading roles to be played by Professor Rao, Ambassador González and Professor Kabbaj.

My delegation welcomes the work of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee at its thirty-fourth session. We greatly value the presentations in the field of space debris and the use of nuclear power sources in outer space. The seminar on space systems for direct TV and radio broadcasting and world information systems for space research was of particular interest. As concerns the Legal Subcommittee, my delegation welcomes the addition of a new agenda item proposed by Mexico, "Review of the status of the five international legal instruments governing outer space".

My delegation hopes that work will continue on studying the scientific and technical aspects of the use of nuclear power sources, so that this subject may be referred to the Legal Subcommittee. With regard to the definition and delimitation of the geostationary orbit, my delegation urges Member States to reply to the questionnaire. In addition, without prejudice to a more detailed analysis of the proposed declaration by Germany, we hope that this item will not be deleted from the agenda of the Legal Subcommittee.

Recent years have seen unbelievable and unprecedented changes on the international political stage. In the domain of space activities, this has produced a transition from the concept of confrontation to a situation of broad and flourishing international cooperation among both the developed and developing countries. However, much still remains to be done. Within that framework, where resources are limited but needs are great, my delegation believes that cooperation will produce the most visible results and concrete applications.

UNISPACE III will provide an appropriate framework for countries with fewer resources but similar needs for satellite information to clearly identify their priorities. Possibilities for undertaking joint projects will

also be highlighted. My delegation hopes there will be great interest and support from the most developed space-faring nations to participate in such enterprises for the benefit of all.

My delegation expresses its satisfaction at the signing of the agreement by Brazil and Mexico for the establishment of the regional centre for space science and technology education. We would reiterate that we are at their disposal to coordinate the training of experts on a complementary basis in accordance with our respective space plans in order to promote future joint activities.

The global situation has changed and has resulted in substantive transformations in the international agenda. Space activities must likewise be adjusted, and in this post-cold war era we believe that two fundamental pillars must cement this new stage: international cooperation, and the training of experts. These two elements will help to ensure that the benefits of the exploration and exploitation of outer space will not be a privilege of the few but an asset to be shared by all mankind.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your statement and for your best wishes to the new members of the Bureau. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of the United Kingdom.

Mr. TREMAYNE-SMITH (United Kingdom): May I add my delegation's welcome to you and the other new members of the Bureau. My delegation looks forward to further innovations in the working methods of this Committee under your chairmanship. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the former Chairman for his sterling service to the Committee and his good stewardship, which has helped to strengthen our position in proceeding with the work before us. The detailed discussion on our working methods have put us where we are today: at the start of a period of major change that will lead to further increases in efficiency of the Committee and its Subcommittees.

My delegation supports the work of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee in preparing the ground work for UNISPACE III, and trusts that the work carried out will be of substantial support to the Preparatory Committee. In addition, my delegation welcomes the progress made on space debris in the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, and the depth and breadth of the discussions. However, it is important to translate all this work into activity, and into improved working practices by all users of outer space. Such activity will enable the current utilization of space to continue, as well

as allowing for new uses of outer space, which should be carried out in a sustainable manner.

As concerns the use of nuclear power sources in outer space, my delegation welcomes the conclusion of the working group that further discussion is necessary in the Subcommittee. My delegation is pleased at the agreement reached in the Chairman's package proposal as it affects the Legal Subcommittee, as well as the reduction in duration of meetings achieved by the Subcommittee this year.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your kind words and for your statement. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Mexico.

Mr. V. ARRIAGA WEISS (Mexico) (*interpretation from Spanish*): My delegation expresses its satisfaction at seeing you presiding over the work of our Committee, and would also like to congratulate the other members of the Bureau on their well-deserved election. We wish to thank the Austrian delegation for its support for the Committee's activities and for the decisive role which it played in identifying a solution for the substantive issues affecting the work of COPUOS and its Subcommittees.

My delegation welcomes the agreement reached yesterday on the organization of work and composition of the Bureau. We hope that that agreement will have a positive impact on the revitalization of the Committee's work.

Regarding the work of this session of the Committee, my delegation has several points to raise. Firstly, as concerns progress on the establishment of a regional centre for space science and technology education for Latin America and the Caribbean, on 11 March 1997 the Governments of Mexico and Brazil signed the agreement to establish that centre. My country's senate ratified the agreement on 29 April and the Government thus completed the necessary formal procedures for its adoption.

My delegation emphasizes the importance it attaches to keeping the subject of the geostationary orbit on the Legal Subcommittee's agenda. We believe that the ITU and COPUOS must both play a role in the solution of problems relating to the use and exploitation of that orbit. Coordination and ongoing consultations must take place between the two; the use and exploitation of the geostationary orbit can only be resolved if it is addressed from different viewpoints. It is for COPUOS to monitor compliance with the Principles on the use of outer space

for peaceful purposes, and therefore this agenda item must not be deleted. Consideration of this subject does fall within the ambit of COPUOS and the mandate of its two Subcommittees.

In conclusion, my delegation would like to express its satisfaction at the results of the informal consultations in the Legal Subcommittee concerning the addition of a new agenda item. In particular, the recommendation to include the item "Review of the status of the five international treaties governing outer space" will make it possible to support the legal regime of outer space. It will also contribute to greater adherence to the five outer space treaties. My delegation looks forward to the strengthening of the agenda of the Legal Subcommittee at its next session.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your kind words and for your statement. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Malaysia.

Ms. M. OTHMAN (Malaysia): I would like to join previous speakers in heartily congratulating you and the other new members of the Bureau. My delegation offers you its fullest cooperation from this our first year of participation in the Committee. My delegation would also like to express our sincere appreciation to Ambassador Hohenfellner for his wise and skillful guidance in the work of the Committee, and especially its reform process.

Malaysia has actively monitored the work of this Committee for several years, mainly through the good offices of the Office for Outer Space Affairs, and we have closely followed global events in space affairs. We have been using remote sensing data for nearly 20 years. In 1995 we launched our first telecommunication satellite into the geostationary orbit, [Myasat-1?], which was privately funded; this was followed by [Myasat-2?] in 1996. We are now building our first microsatellite for a planned launch in late-1997 or early-1998. Its main objective is the development of indigenous capability in satellite technology.

Malaysia adopts an open position in matters relating to space; we have already embarked upon various collaborative programmes with Brazil, Canada, India, Russia, South Africa, United Kingdom and the United States. My delegation believes that the wide range of technological advances and expertise available in these countries, as well as the differences in ideology, will assist Malaysia in determining its own vision and direction in space. We hope to expand this cooperation in the future.

Through our membership of COPUOS Malaysia hopes to contribute actively to the Committee's important work in guiding mankind's destiny in space, and in bringing the developing countries into the fold of the space-faring nations of the world. We look forward to speaking on other subjects later during the session.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your statement and your kind words to the members of the Bureau. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Pakistan.

Mr. M. NASIM SHAH (Pakistan): My delegation joins the other distinguished representatives in extending our warmest congratulations to you on your election to the high office of Chairman of this Committee, as well as to the other newly elected members of the Bureau. With your experience, we are sure that the current session will be successful in achieving its objectives, and we assure you of your fullest cooperation.

My delegation notes with appreciation the work carried out by the two Subcommittees of COPUOS, under the chairmanship of Professor Rex and Mr. Mikulka. Substantial progress has been made in the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee in preparing its recommendations, as Advisory Committee, for the holding of UNISPACE III, in the light of the guidelines laid down by the Committee. These recommendations are quite comprehensive and cover most of the relevant aspects, for which the Chairman of that Subcommittee deserves our thanks. My delegation will speak in greater detail on this item when it is taken up by the Committee.

The Legal Subcommittee has, in a comparatively short time, produced a new item for inclusion on its agenda as from its 1998 session. My delegation urges delegates to consider the specific proposals already made for possible additional new items for the Subcommittee's agenda.

Several years ago the General Assembly requested COPUOS to consider new projects in the field of outer space. In 1985, through its resolution 40/162, the General Assembly had requested COPUOS:

"to continue its work in accordance with the present resolution, to consider as appropriate new projects in outer space activities and to submit a report to the General Assembly at its 41st Session, including its views on which subjects should be studied in the future".

This request has been repeated year after year, and yet again in General Assembly resolution 51/123 (paragraph 39):

"[The General Assembly] requests the Committee to continue its work, in accordance with the present resolution, to consider, as appropriate, new projects in outer space activities, and to submit a report to the General Assembly at its 52nd Session, including its views on which subjects should be studied in the future".

From the above it is interesting to note that the General Assembly has requested this Committee to consider new projects, a subject which, as far as my delegation is aware, has never been taken up in the past. Neither has this item been included in the provisional agenda for the fortieth session of our Committee. My delegation would therefore like to draw the Committee's attention to the lack of appropriate attention to this topic, and would like to see more emphasis placed on consideration of new projects, bearing in mind their relevance to the concerns and needs of the developing countries.

My delegation appreciates the organisation of the symposia by COSPAR and the IAF at the annual sessions of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee. Through these symposia, delegates are able to obtain state-of-the-art information on developments covering various areas of space science and technology. This is of particular benefit to the developing countries in formulating their national and joint space programmes, and we hope these symposia will continue to take place.

My delegation is pleased to announce that in line with continuing regional activities for cooperation in space technology and its applications, the fourth Asia-Pacific Conference on Multilateral Cooperation in Space Technology and Applications is scheduled to be held in Bahrain from 1 to 4 December 1997. This will provide an excellent forum for various agencies and institutions, as well as individual experts and policy- and decision-makers, to exchange views on the development of bilateral and multilateral cooperative activities in space science, space technology and their applications in the Asia-Pacific region.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your statement and for some thought-provoking ideas contained therein, as well as your kind words addressed to the new members of the Bureau. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Inmarsat.

Mr. D. SAGAR (Observer, International Mobile Satellite Organization (Inmarsat)): Inmarsat welcomes the opportunity of addressing this session and of bringing the Committee up to date on recent developments in Inmarsat's global system and services, as well as some current programmes which may be of interest. Our published statement gives more details, but I will summarize some of the more relevant aspects of it.

As far as Inmarsat's present global system is concerned, we are in the course of launching a third generation of satellites which will be much more powerful than previous ones. They will use spot beam technology and provide enhanced capacity for voice and data communications to small mobile terminals on ships, aircraft and vehicles. They also provide a more efficient use of the spectrum, and by mid-1998 we hope that a total of nine satellites will form our space segment constellation, covering all areas of the world apart from the polar regions.

Turning to our current services portfolio, Inmarsat's original mandate to serve the maritime community has now evolved into the sole global provider of satellite communications at sea, in the air and on land. Our system supports telephony, telefax, electronic mail and various other applications including navigation and two-way paging, and is currently used on board some 41,000 ships, including both large and smaller fishing vessels. It is particularly significant that the use of Inmarsat is expressly authorized by the International Maritime Organization to satisfy mandatory ship radio carriage requirements for safety of life at sea.

Some 2,000 commercial and corporate aircraft use the system for passenger and operational communications. By the end of this decade, Inmarsat is expected to become the basis of transoceanic air traffic control. On land, the most rapidly growing area of Inmarsat's services, approximately 30,000 terminals have been commissioned. They are used for various applications, particularly by land transport fleet operators, as well as by agencies and travellers operating in remote areas.

Disasters and emergencies are of special significance. In this domain, the Inmarsat system has been used many times related to natural disaster, where other communication systems have broken down and there is no alternative available. The disaster relief agencies and news broadcasters have therefore used the system extensively. In this context, Inmarsat has a policy of free use of the system for our signatories, and we cooperate with the United Nations and other agencies concerned with disaster relief.

A recent evolution of Inmarsat has been the development of smaller and less expensive terminals, in particular the Inmarsat telephone. This is a digital telephone with fax and data capabilities; its terminals are now smaller than a laptop, it weighs a mere 2 kilos and is as easy to carry as hand-held cellular mobile phones. It can therefore easily be carried by hand to remote sites and be quickly deployed by untrained personnel.

Other innovations are the provision of navigation services, at present through transponders on board the third generation satellites which provide monitoring and integrity signals to enhance the position accuracy of the United States Global Position System, and the Russian [Glonas?] system. Inmarsat is considering its fourth generation of products and services for new markets such as broadband, navigation, broadcast, multimedia, and rural and remote communications.

Turning to some regional developments, particular stress has been laid upon regionalism by Inmarsat over recent years. It has established a permanent office in Beijing and regional directors have been appointed to cover nearly all geographical areas. Inmarsat's programme of cooperation with developing countries provides an opportunity for training courses in satellite communications. Pilot projects have been established to demonstrate the benefits of Inmarsat, such as the use of payphones in rural and remote areas, and data terminals capable of handling different languages.

In common with the other intergovernmental satellite operators, Intelsat and Eutelsat, we have been reviewing our institutional and business structures to cope with the changes which have taken place since these organizations were initially established. Examples include the privatization of national telecommunications operators and the appearance of competing systems. Inmarsat members have acknowledged that a more efficient corporate structure is necessary. Over the past two or three years, consideration has been given to the transfer of business to a national registered company with a fiduciary board of directors, and access to external capital. Under that model it would nevertheless remain subject to oversight by the Inmarsat Assembly of Parties on important basic principles, namely the maintenance of maritime distress and safety services, non-discriminatory access to services, service to all geographical areas where there is a need for mobile communications, peaceful purposes, and fair competition. Meetings which will address these subjects are continuing this year, and as yet no decisions have been taken.

Turning briefly to regulatory issues, Inmarsat has been faced with the problem of regulatory barriers to transborder use of its systems. Technically it is possible to use satellite communications throughout the world, but many countries do restrict access for economic, security and other reasons, thus preventing the effective and rapid deployment of mobile satellite services when there are often no alternatives, and denying those countries a powerful engine of economic growth.

Inmarsat has been in the forefront of the campaign to persuade national authorities to dismantle such barriers and also cooperates with the ITU and the WTO on recent initiatives taken by those bodies – for example, agreement on a Memorandum of Understanding on the circulation of global mobile personal communications by satellite. Those activities are currently in progress and will actively continue.

A matter which relates more to the Legal Subcommittee concerns peaceful purposes; under our Convention, Inmarsat is required to act exclusively for peaceful purposes. Over the years we have received many requests to equip naval, armed forces and other law enforcement agencies, including United Nations peace-keeping forces, with satellite terminals. After a thorough legal analysis, in practice Inmarsat has interpreted the peaceful purposes requirement to mean that a ship involved in armed conflict could not use the system, other than for distress, safety or other humanitarian purposes. However, use of the system would be permitted by peace-keeping forces acting under the auspices of the United Nations Security Council, even if engaged in armed conflict to accomplish their mission. Use for legitimate individual or collective self-defence against armed attack, consistent with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter, is also allowed.

As concerns further developments, Inmarsat's membership reached 80 this year, and we are continuing to urge States to join. The system is available to all countries, whether members or not, on a non-discriminatory basis. With respect to our cooperation with this Committee, we have a specific institutional obligation to cooperate with COPUOS and have been privileged to do so throughout our existence during the 1980s and 1990s. Currently the system responds to many of the recommendations of UNISPACE 82, such as the development of smaller terminals, the availability of services in developing countries and rural communities, search and rescue purposes, and for international navigation.

Inmarsat has been happy to cooperate closely with the Programme on Space Applications and looks forward to future cooperation in that respect. Inmarsat was an active participant in UNISPACE 82 and will follow the preparations for UNISPACE III with great interest.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your informative statement. The next speaker is the distinguished representative of the European Space Agency.

Mr. G. GIAMPALMO (Observer, European Space Agency): I would like to express my appreciation at the opportunity to participate in this Committee on behalf of ESA, and I would like to thank Dr. Jasentuliyana for his kind words and welcome. ESA congratulates the new members of the Bureau on your election and wishes you every success.

Turning to the agenda of the Committee, I would like to recall the many areas in which ESA plays an important role, as well as some highlights of the main events of the past year. As concerns space debris, ESA attaches considerable importance to this issue, and participates actively in the world of the IDAC (?IADC), in which specialists from space-faring nations discuss the technical aspects of space debris. Within this framework ESA organized a major conference in Darmstadt (Germany), at the ESA establishment ESOC. Entitled "The Second European Conference on Space Debris", this Conference was a great success; over 100 papers were presented, as well as 40 posters. Some 200 specialists attended the event. As you know, the ESA expert also follows closely the work of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee on this important subject.

After accomplishing its mission, ESA's Earth observation satellite ERS-1 has been de-activated, but can still be reactivated for special missions. Meanwhile ERS-2 continues to acquire radar data. ESA is also preparing for the next generation of Earth observation satellites, ENVISAT, at present under development for launch in 1999. ENVISAT missions are under definition at present and consist of two types: one is more application-oriented (Earth Watch) and another more science-oriented (Earth Explorer).

ESA has been continuing its work on the next generation of European launchers. After the failure last year of the first test flight of our new launcher Ariane 5, the Agency, together with its industrial partners, has made a great joint effort and the next qualification launch will take place in September 1997.

I am pleased to report on the determination of our Member States to carry out the Scientific Programme CLUSTER. You may recall that the satellites developed by ESA were lost in the launch failure of Ariane 5 one year ago, but The CLUSTER satellite will be developed and launched again. The mission has been designed primarily to study the three-dimensional shape and dynamics behaviour of small-scale structures in the Earth's plasma environment.

In the field of telecommunications, ESA is developing the Artemis satellite, a data relay satellite which is being developed for testing and operating new, innovative telecommunications techniques, in particular optical inter-satellite links. This programme is being developed in close collaboration with the Japanese NASDA. Together with the European Commission and the European Civil Aviation Authorities (EUROCONTROL), ESA has created a tripartite group which will develop Europe's Global Navigation System Satellite in close cooperation with national entities outside of ESA member countries.

In the area of manned spaceflights, ESA continues its preparation for participation in the International Space Station through the flights of European astronauts to the Russian Mir station. The negotiations for the appropriate international agreement are complete, and those for the Memorandum of Understanding between NASA and other agencies are nearing conclusion; it is hoped that ESA Member States, the United States, Russia, Japan, Canada and their respective agencies will sign the Space Station Agreement in the second half of 1997, thus marking the formal commencement of the most ambitious international technical and scientific cooperation programme.

From the above, the Committee can see that ESA is continuing with its programmes in developing space technologies of the future together, and jointly, with many countries here present. Looking to the work of the Committee as concerns UNISPACE III, the United Kingdom delegation presented a document to the meeting of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee held in February 1997. This document was coordinated by ESA with the support of all its Member States.

I would like to close by wishing you, the Vice-Chairman and the Rapporteur every success in presiding over this important Committee.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your statement and best wishes. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of the International Law Association.

Mr. K. BÖCKSTIEGEL (Observer, International Law Association): On behalf of the ILA, I would like to convey to you and your colleagues in the new Bureau of the Committee our congratulations on your election, and our best wishes for your future work.

For the benefit of those delegates and observers who have not attended the sessions of this Committee in recent years, I will present a basic outline of the Association. The ILA was founded in 1873, since which time it has always been a non-governmental organization of academics and practitioners in the field of international law. The ILA has national branches in all corners of the world, with its headquarters in London. Its work is presented and formalized at bi-annual conferences held in different venues worldwide, the last two having been held in Buenos Aires and Helsinki.

Between the holding of these conference, the work is carried out in large part by committees which are established for the various fields of public and private international law. One such committee is the ILA Space Law Committee, which I have the honour to chair. Its Rapporteur is Professor Williams, of Argentina, and its members are distinguished specialists in the field, many of whom are well known to the members of COPUOS and its Legal Subcommittee. For further information on the ILA and its work regarding space law, reference may be made to the recent United Nations publication "Space activities of the United Nations and international organizations" (document A/AC.105/521), as well as to the ILA conference reports which are published after every ILA conference in book form.

The work of the ILA Space Law Committee has focused in recent years on the protection of the environment of Earth and of space in relation to space activities, in particular the issue of space debris. I am therefore pleased to note the progress which has been achieved in COPUOS on these subjects. A particular milestone is marked by the fact that at its 1994 session, the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee included the issue of space debris on its agenda and discussed this topic at considerable length. In its sessions between 1994 and the present, the Subcommittee treated the question of space debris as a priority agenda item and adopted a multi-year plan for its work. The ILA notes with pleasure that the 1997 session of the Subcommittee made good progress in implementing the multi-year plan, in particular in concentrating on the modelling of the space debris environment and risk assessment, as well as current operational debris mitigation practices with a view to developing cost-effective mitigation methods.

Mr. Chairman, you most convincingly stressed the importance of the issue of space debris in your introductory statement to the Committee yesterday. In the context of the multi-year plan, the ILA will make every effort to assist in work on this topic. We note, however, that there is still some hesitation in the Legal Subcommittee to take up substantial discussions on space debris in the foreseeable future, despite the suggestion of several delegations at its 1997 session to open such discussions. The ILA feels that exchange of information on that agenda item should take place between the two Subcommittees: any discussion in the Legal Subcommittee obviously needs to be based on scientific and technical information available in the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee. Equally, for long-term progress to be achieved, the option of adopting an international instrument must be taken into account in the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee; the specific expertise of the Legal Subcommittee can obviously make an important contribution in that regard. This process could be followed irrespective of whether the instrument in question is a mere code of conduct, a more formal text, or a binding legal instrument. A general topic along the lines of "Legal aspects of space debris" would be without prejudice to the outcome of such discussions.

In addition to the text of my statement, I would like to add that the ILA endorses the progress achieved by the adoption (by consensus) of the Chairman's package proposal. You will recall that the agreed agenda structures include consideration by the Legal Subcommittee of the possible inclusion of new items on "Comparison of the norms of space law and those of international environmental law", and "Review of existing norms of international law applicable to space debris". The ILA believes that these two interrelated items could form the basis of an extremely interesting discussion and would provide valuable assistance to the work of COPUOS.

As concerns space debris and the environment, I will give you a brief progress report on the ILA's work in this field. Pursuant to a decision taken at the ILA Conference which took place in Seoul in 1996, the ILA Space Law Committee has been conducting research and exchanging information and views, and has subsequently prepared draft documents on the protection of the environment from damage caused by space activities, particularly space debris. During this process, the legal experts in the Space Law Committee have had the benefit of support from three scientific consultants, namely Professor Lubos Perek (Czech Republic), Professor Dieter Rex (Germany) and Mr. Umberto [Ricciardi?] (Argentina). The ILA is delighted to note that one of

them, Professor Rex, has been re-elected as Chairman of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee.

Landmarks of ILA's work on space debris were a regional seminar of the ILA in Buenos Aires, held in 1987; the international colloquium at the Institute of Air and Space Law in Cologne, in 1988, with special emphasis on the interdisciplinary aspects of the issue, which resulted in a book; discussions and a further mandate of the ILA Conference in Warsaw in 1988; a meeting in Asunción (Paraguay) in October 1988; a report to the 1990 ILA Conference in Australia, which resulted in a mandate to the Space Law Committee to start work on the elaboration of relevant principles; following the preparation of three drafts, a report to the 1992 ILA Conference, which resulted in a mandate to prepare a draft final text for an international instrument.

After long and extensive preparations since 1992, three drafts have been elaborated, circulated and discussed on various occasions by the ILA Space Law Committee and the final text, entitled "International instrument on the protection of the environment from damage caused by space debris", was submitted with an extensive commentary by the Rapporteur to the 66th ILA Conference, held in Buenos Aires in 1994. The Conference adopted it in a formal resolution, the text of which is attached, together with the text of the instrument, to the written version of my statement as distributed at this meeting.

Major provisions of this final text deal with: definitions, scope of application; the general obligation to cooperate; obligations to prevent, inform, consult and negotiate in good faith; compatibility with other agreements; responsibility and liability; dispute settlement; and the standard provisions on formalities of an international instrument. As many delegations are aware, a symposium was held in connection with the 1995 meeting of the Legal Subcommittee of COPUOS, where it was again suggested that the Subcommittee take up the topic of space debris on its agenda. It was felt that the ILA document might be a good starting point for such discussion, even if all that was presently contemplated was a code of conduct.

In addition to adopting the draft instrument on space debris, the Buenos Aires resolution requested the ILA Space Law Committee to re-examine the 1984 ILA Draft Convention on the Settlement of Space Law Dispute to determine whether developments since 1984 necessitate any changes or the elaboration of a new instrument. In that same context it was requested to examine what further steps could be taken to promote the

peaceful settlement of disputes regarding space activities. This examination is already under way in the ILA Space Committee, and it has been established that the growing use of outer space, particularly the rapid increase in commercial space applications, leads to demand for a widely available, fast, efficient and acceptable framework for the settlement of disputes regarding space activities.

It is no mere coincidence that the International Court of Justice, when celebrating its fiftieth anniversary last year, held a special session on "Equipping the Court to deal with Developing Areas of International Law", selected "Space Law" as such a developing area, and asked me to make the main presentation on that item. The exchange of views during this meeting at The Hague were taken into account in the further work of the ILA Space Law Committee when a progress report was presented to the ILA Conference in Helsinki last year. On the basis of the discussion and the mandate given by a resolution in Helsinki, the ILA Space Law Committee is currently preparing a report, and a final text for a proposed draft instrument to be adopted at the 1998 ILA Conference. The resolution of the Helsinki Conference is also attached to my statement as distributed.

In conclusion, I would like to reaffirm the readiness of the International Law Association to support the work of this Committee as well as its Legal Subcommittee.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your detailed statement. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Intersputnik.

Mr. V. VESHCHUNOV (Observer, International Organization of Space Communications (Intersputnik)): My organization offers you sincere congratulations on your election to the responsible position as Chairman of this Committee; I would also like to congratulate the members of the Bureau and wish them every success in their important work.

I am honoured to address this distinguished audience and tell you something of the present status and future plans of my Organization. Intersputnik, which was established in 1971, has 22 Member States and operates communication satellites deployed in the geostationary orbit over an arc extending from 14° West to 161° East.

It is no secret that initially Intersputnik had a limited membership, and its constituency was politically motivated. Today, Intersputnik is a well-known global operator on the satellite communication services market.

However, the changes that are taking place, especially the new trends in global telecommunication market development, are setting new challenges for Intersputnik, among which the most important is to satisfy the growing demands of our customers in communication services and the expansion of the organization's business.

The Intersputnik Board recently adopted a brand new concept of procurement of new-generation communications satellites in cooperation with potential investors. The establishment of a new joint venture is the logical result of Intersputnik's two years of work to expand its organizational structure and technological base for new prospective satellites. This venture will be a suitable response to the challenge of the rapidly changing market environment reflected in new developments among the leading international satellite organizations – for example, Inmarsat, Intelsat and Eutelsat.

The result of these developments has helped to influence Intersputnik in its decision to establish an ambitious joint venture with the Lockheed Martin Corporation. The new venture will cover the entire technological cycle of satellite communications, from manufacture and launch to operation. A Memorandum of Understanding and Joint Venture Formation Agreement have already been signed, and Intersputnik's major contribution to the new company is its wealth of experience in the operation of satellite systems.

Twenty-five years of successful work on the international telecommunications market has allowed Intersputnik to create a global Earth station network for operation in the system, and to establish solid relations with more than 100 States and private companies all over the world who use the communication services provided by Intersputnik.

The launch of the first Lockheed Martin Intersputnik series satellite foreseen for late 1998, to

the 75° East slot, will encourage further development of Intersputnik's present network, and create the possibility of building new networks in the dynamically developing regions of Eastern Europe, South and South-East Asia, the CIS, Middle East and Africa. In accordance with the basic principles of the Joint Venture Formation Agreement, Intersputnik will be the primary operator of the first satellite. The launch of additional satellites will provide global coverage of the Atlantic, Indian and Pacific Ocean regions and thus a possibility to establish international, national and regional networks.

Intersputnik is confident that Lockheed Martin's extensive satellite, launch and ground system capabilities, combined with the long experience of Intersputnik as a provider of satellite services, will allow this new company to provide state-of-the-art solutions to our customers' communications needs, thus contributing to the development of multilateral cooperation in international telecommunications. By forming an alliance with one of the largest global manufacturers of satellite technologies, Intersputnik welcomes the approach of the twenty-first century with confidence.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your presentation. I have no further names on the list of speakers; if anyone does wish to speak I would ask them to give their names to the Secretariat.

I will shortly adjourn this meeting of the Committee. Before doing so, I would like to remind delegations that this afternoon we will continue our consideration of agenda item 5, "General exchange of views" and, time permitting, we will begin our consideration of agenda item 6, "Ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes". The meeting is now adjourned.

The sitting adjourned at 12 50 p.m.